Vancouver Master Chorale
Board of Directors Meeting
6 June 2026

Members Present: Lula Hiigel, Valerie Winkle, Andrew McCaffrey, Mark Congdon, Susan Pautz, Tom Paulu, Jonathan Bowman, Dennis Haberkamp, Robert Eddy
Members Absent: Philip Denton
Guests: Robin Patton

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM.

The minutes from the April 14 board meeting were presented for review and approval.

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 14 board meeting was made by Robert Eddy and seconded by Jonathan Bowman. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Andrew McCaffrey reviewed the financials through May.

- The cash balance is currently at $40.8K.
- Total assets are $89.7K.
- Year-to-date (YTD) income is ahead of budget projections by $1061. Expenses are also below budget projections by $7,673 ($86K versus 93.7K). There is a YTD surplus of $9.9K, which includes $4K for next year's scholarships.
- On balance the chorale is in good financial condition for the year.
- Income from the raffle and ticket sales have been positive factors, helping to offset other income categories that ended unfavorable to budget.

Tom Paulu pointed out that we are paying our accompanist more than our artistic director. It was clarified that Philip is currently hired as an independent contractor, which is appropriate for an organization of our size, while Colleen is paid on an hourly basis. We felt that Philip should be paid at least as much as the accompanist. Andrew confirmed that the accompanist is paid $75/hour, which is billed monthly. The director's honorarium is currently based on the amounts paid to Jana during her final season with the chorale ($2,000 per concert). Various payment options were discussed. There was agreement that Philip must be paid a fair amount, consistent with other similar artistic directors in the area. Andrew pointed out that we must ensure that any increase is funded beyond our current income stream. The topic was tabled and will be reconsidered at a future board meeting

Andrew reported that he has registered VMC as a participant in the ongoing Discover Card class action suit, but doesn't expect to receive significant compensation from the suit.

An out-of-budget request for $180 to pay for flowers sent from the chorale for Ron Frazier's funeral was made. Ron was the music director for the VMC from 1987-2010.

Lula Hiigel made a motion to approve an out-of-budget request of $180 as reimbursement for flowers sent from the VMC for Ron Frazier's funeral. The motion was seconded by Jonathan Bowman. Motion passed.

Robert Eddy made a motion to approve the May financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Lula Hiigel. Motion passed.

Budget Calendar:

Andrew presented the proposed Budget Calendar which specifies dates for each step in the upcoming budget creation process, as summarized below:

- June 6: Review YTD actuals and highlight budget items based on areas of responsibility. Provide historical financial date for reference. (Completed)
- June 11: Budget input opens.
- July 6: Initial estimates due back to the treasurer.
- Week of July 6: Prepare working budget based on inputs.
- Week of July 13: Initial feedback from President and Artistic Director and review by responsible parties.
- Week of July 20: Treasurer follow-up and second draft preparation.
- Week of July 27: Second draft feedback and review
- Aug. 3: Final revisions due to treasurer. Final approval of budget at August board meeting

Lula Hiigel made a motion to approve the Budget Calendar as presented. Motion seconded by Dennis Haberkamp. Motion passed.

Budget Reallocation Policy:

Andrew presented a proposed Budget Reallocation Policy for review and approval. The policy establishes guidelines for the reallocation of budgeted funds in a manner that allows for efficient day-to-day financial management while maintaining appropriate board oversight of the VMC's approved budget. The policy details guidelines for reallocations of up to $500 within an area of responsibility or between areas of responsibility without full board approval. Reallocations about the maximum will require board approval. The policy is intended to facilitate small dollar adjustments within an area of responsibility and details policies, procedures, limits, restrictions, and documentation requirements.

Lula Hiigel made a motion to approve the Budget Reallocation Policy as presented. Motion seconded by Jonathan Bowman. Motion passed.

Director's Report:

Since Philip was not able to attend the meeting, Lula reported for him.

- Philip expects that the budget for sheet music next year will be about the same as this year's budget.
- He expects fees for musicians will be 1/2 to 2/3 the amounts spent during last year.

- Philip provided a link to planned rehearsal/concert dates for next year as well as the themes and planned choral works for each concert. VMC Schedule 2026-2027 - Google Docs It was noted that Philip's schedule does not include the "jumpstart" rehearsals.

Valerie Winkle suggested that additions to next year's budget should include funds to pay First Presbyterian Church to run the slide shows for our concerts and funds to pay for a professional videographer for at least 2 of our concerts next season. She also suggested that we reach out to local businesses for future raffle donations rather than asking choir members to contribute items.

Other Committee Reports:

Strategic Planning Committee:

Lula Hiigel reported that at the recent Strategic Planning Committee meeting five strategic priorities were established for the chorale, including:

- Choral excellence
- Audience growth and diversity
- Sustainable financial growth
- Organizational structure and governance
- Membership recruitment and nurturing

Committee members are currently detailing desired outcomes and action steps for their assigned priorities. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Sunday, June 14.

Development Committee:

Dennis Haberkamp reported that a $25K grant from the Cowlitz Indian Tribe has been received and will be cashed soon. It is a restricted grant that will be directed for the March 2027 "Children's Concert" which will be offered as a "pay-what-you-can" basis for tickets. He has sent a letter of thanks to the tribal leaders on behalf of the chorale.

Dennis also reported that the City of Vancouver will be opening grant applications for arts in the city beginning on July 15. The deadline for submissions is September 10th. He is monitoring the situation.

The Development Committee is also working with First Presbyterian Church on next year's rental contract which will include a concert dates in June and will further define terms related to the use of their technical systems, such as projectors.

Membership:

Susan Pautz reported that Philip would like membership commitment forms completed as soon as possible so he can plan for the addition of new singers to better balance the chorale. Tom Paulu mentioned that new membership requirements for the coming year (such as rehearsal attendance commitments, etc.) will be discussed at the next board meeting and will hopefully be in place prior to auditions in August.

Susan also confirmed that audition requests are being forward to Philip and herself.

Marketing:

Tom Paulu reported on printing and delivery problems with the May concert programs. This was the second concert that delivery problems were encountered. The printer offered a $300 remediation payment because of the issues. We will ask him to deduct the amount from our next billing rather than sending us a check. There was discussion as to whether we could get the program printed locally.

Lula Hiigel made a motion to accept the remediation proposal of $300 from our designer/printer to be deducted from our next program bill. The motion was seconded by Dennis Haberkamp. Motion passed.

Lula Hiigel made a motion to pursue trying to identify a local printer to use for program printing. The motion was seconded by Dennis Haberkamo. Motion passed.

A long-term goal for next season is to get some advertising into the programs.

Publicity Committee:

Tom Paulu reported that a new publicity committee is being created to create emails, social media pushes, and other marketing initiatives. He stated that we might try to get an advertisement in an upcoming concert program from the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. He also led a discussion related to advertising plans in case the chorale wins the upcoming Columbian's "Best of Clark County" contest.

Tom also mentioned that patron surveys have shown that most people attending our concerts learn of the events through word of mouth from friends and relatives Newspaper advertising is expensive but has not been very productive He stated that the chorale might try getting business cards printed that advertise our concerts that could be passed out by chorale members when they tell others about upcoming concerts. We have received good support from retirement homes and hope to work with them next season to arrange transportation to our concerts for their residents.

Technology:

Mark Congdon reported that he plans to review the chorale's various mailing lists, including access permissions to the Google Drive, before next season and coordinate with the board members.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 13, 6-8 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Eddy
Secretary